

MAYOR ANNOUNCES NEW POLICE CLASS

City to Hire Police Recruit Class of 30 in July

(Columbus) Continuing to keep Public Safety the City's the number one neighborhood priority, Mayor Michael B. Coleman today announced that the Public Safety Department will seat a class of 30 Police recruits in July 2006, in addition to the 150 new officers already budgeted in the 2005 and 2006 December classes. This added hiring is an important part of the overall plans to increase neighborhood safety through on-going initiatives and new proposals to be released in the coming weeks.

"When we put forth our budget, we promised to track retirements and maintain officers needed to keep our neighborhoods safe, and we've done it, with the largest number of recruits to ever be added to the force through one year," said Mayor Coleman. "These 30 recruits, in addition to the class in training today, and the class of 75 that will start in December, are one more step in our multi-part plan to increase safety this summer in addition to our summer strike force and anti-gang efforts."

According to Safety Director Mitchell Brown, this additional class will cost approximately \$1 million, and be paid for through budget savings and existing City Safety Funds. At this time, 63 of the 75 Police recruits who began training in December 2005 remain and are on track to graduate in June 2006. Recruit attrition is normal and expected during the course of a class. The July and December 2006 classes will add to the current contingent of 1,822 Police officers today. The City employed 1,792 officers in January of 2000 when the Mayor took office.

"We are very excited that an additional police recruit class will begin in July in our state-of-the-art Police Training Academy because it will address recent retirements and put more officers on the street," said Deputy Police Chief Walter Distelsweig who oversees the Training Academy with the Columbus Division of Police.

Last November, Mayor Michael B. Coleman's proposed a \$403 million safety-forces budget that called for larger-than-normal police classes, and worked with members of Columbus City Council to prepare for contingencies of higher-than expected retirements.

"Public Safety, our police officers and firefighters, are 70% of the City budget, and we continue to be fiscally conservative in our budgeting, while maintaining stable numbers of safety forces to respond to any kind of emergency," said Safety Director Brown.